

Meagan K. McGuire
20 Henry St. Apt 3
New Britain, CT 06051

February 21, 2017

Dear Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the
Appropriations Committee,

My name is Meagan McGuire, Licensed Massage Therapist and former registered nurse who has utilized HAVEN's advocacy and monitoring services as a critical pathway to establishing credible documentation and evidence supporting my lived recovery and sobriety. HAVEN has multiple functions for licensed professionals that provide a vital resource to maintaining the safety of our community and integrity of regulated professionals at large. I am writing in opposition to the proposed reallocation of the \$5 license renewal fee to the General Fund, despite the proposed reporting mandate repeal.

As an agency, HAVEN provides unique support and advocacy to those they serve, as well as expressing an objective voice to protect the public. As a former nurse with a suspended license in another state, my experience with HAVEN's Voluntary Agreement for Monitoring Pending Public Action (VAMPPA) has afforded me opportunities to improve and integrate my personal recovery life into my ability to practice as a licensed professional. HAVEN is unique in their facilitation of monitoring to compile evidence of an individual's sobriety; there was no available resource to provide consistent, random, chain of custody drug screening or compilation of data, such as recovery meeting involvement or therapeutic interactions, except for HAVEN. HAVEN's advocacy work facilitated interdepartmental and interstate communication that I, alone, was unable to achieve. As a direct result of compiling evidence of sobriety and advocacy to work with multiple agencies in multiple states, HAVEN has provided the opportunity for

me to apply for nursing license reinstatement out of state and to be deemed safe to practice as a Licensed Massage Therapist in Connecticut.

In terms of finances, HAVEN should not be a benefit only to the affluent. At present, HAVEN has, fortunately, not increased service charges since its initiation of services, which truly affords the opportunity for more individuals to participate. Personally, while working towards recovery, I was employed in a retail setting and utilized state services that helped me to get by financially. Any increase in service charges would have made it impossible for me to improve my circumstances through professional licensure. Many people seeking recovery from addiction and mental health conditions require outside therapies and face economic constraints as a consequence of past behavior and present positive efforts. By removing any funding from HAVEN, there would be significant impact on the ability to provide vital services to a population already struggling to reintegrate as active, positive members of the professional workforce, and society at large.

Please consider the dynamic work performed by HAVEN as a monitoring and advocacy group worthy of the state's direct financial support. By supporting HAVEN, you are supporting the mission of recovery, reintegration and ensuring the safety of the public. I implore you to ensure HAVEN receives the increased \$5 license renewal fees as a source of critical financial support toward their much needed efforts.